W-S Feeds Chronicle

Volume 11 - Issue 5 | **Conestogo, Mount Forest, Tavistock** | **December 2011- January 2012**

CHRISTMAS HOURS

It is hard to believe that another year has almost slipped away. With the coming of December our thoughts turn to family and friends as we reflect on how fortunate we are to live in a country as free and wonderful as Canada. As you sit to enjoy the bounty of our great country and celebrate the greatest birth in all history we hope that you will consider someone, some where who is less fortunate and let the love of this special season fill your enitre being and flow beyond yourself. It is with that spirit in mind that we wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and prosperity throughout the coming year.

We thank you for your loyalty, support and business this past year . It is our pleasure and honour to serve you and be a part of your very special team.

Over the holidays we will be closed:

Monday December 26, 2011

Monday January 2, 2012

Thank you from everyone at W-S Feed & Supplies Ltd.

BOVINE VIRAL DIARRHEA

Bovine Viral Diarrhea (BVD) is an important disease with a wide economic impact affecting cattle. Economic losses can be caused in various ways by this virus. This includes reproductive losses such as abortions and stillbirths, birth of poor-doing calves, and development of persistently-infected animals who transmit the disease through the herd. There is no cure for BVD but there are many important preventatives that can be incorporated into your herd. BVD is a complex disease that can spread easily through a herd via manure, urine, milk, semen, saliva, and nasal secretions. Generally nose to nose contact is necessary for spread but the virus can also be passed via dirty feed buckets and used needles. The fetus is especially susceptible to the effects of BVD, and depending on time of infection, it can lead to abortion or resorption of the fetus, and the birth of Persistenly-Infected (PI) calves. Many PI calves will die before 2 years of age. PI calves are the major reservoirs for BVD so it is

IMPORTANCE OF FEEDING CALF STARTERS

• A quality calf starter helps to meet a calf's nutritional requirements for maintenance and development.

• It is a valuable source of additional and necessary energy, which is needed for the calf to stay healthy.

• The starter will be the primary stimulator of rumen development.

• As the rumen develops, calves benefit from ruminal fermentation, which contributes to heat production.

DECEMBER SPECIALS

ALL DOG AND CAT PET FOOD
Receive $1.00 off per bag when you buy 5 bags

Receive $1.50 off per bag when you buy 10 bags.

These savings are in addition to our regular cash discounts.

WINTER TIPS TO MAINTAIN HEALTHY, GROWING CALVES

• Make sure that newborn calves are dried quickly and thoroughly.

• Provide housing with no drafts, but good air quality.

• Bed calves often and heavily with straw to help keep them dry and well insulated;

important to look for them. Generally, calves that are less than 3 months of age can have an ear notch or skin biopsy done to determine if BVD is present. For calves over the age of 3 months, a blood test is generally recommended.

An appropriate vaccination program set up is important. Generally, it is recommended that a vaccine with both VD type I and II protection be used. It is also important that proper use of the vaccine is followed. Make sure that the vaccine has been stored properly and read the label and follow the directions. In addition, paying attention to proper sanitation procedures on your farm, ensuring good quality nutrition and housing, making sure calves get good quality colostrum and quarantining new additions from other sources, if possible, will help to minimize BVD in your herd. If in doubt, have your animals tested. BVD can have serious economic implications overall. Although BVD is complex and costly, aggressive testing and use of an effective vaccination program can greatly reduce the effects of the disease. (Ontario Beef)

CONTROLLING UNCONTROLLABLE FEED COSTS

Feed costs have continued to rise as both the increase in cash crop acres and the overall demand for land put upward pressure on pasture costs, while demand for grains has pushed their cost up as well. The recent Beef Benchmarking study conducted by the University of Guelph for the beef industry in Ontario showed that feed costs continue to be the single biggest variable cost for beef cow calf operations. However, these feed costs per cow ranged from just above $100 per cow to over $600 per cow. Even considering the vagaries of data collection, this huge differrence between operations means that there is opportunity on some farms to reduce their feed costs.

How can a producer reduce the cost of feed per cow? Start with pasture. It's cheaper than stored feed. The more grazing days per year, the lower the amount of stored feed required, and the lower the cost per cow per year. Stockpiled forages, specialty crops like turnips or kale, or even grazing corn will provide cheaper feed than stored hay. The exercise that cows get by walking for grazing, keeps animals healthier and in shape for calving. Another way to reduce feed costs is to select animals which are more feed efficient. The faster an animal grew, the better its feed conversion. These tests showed that there are significant overall feed efficiency differences between genetic line. A newer method of measuring feed efficiency is called Residual Feed Intake. Residual Feed Intake or RFI, is the measurement of the difference between an animal's actual feed intake and its expected feed requirements. What RFI tells us is the difference between what an individual animal eats compared with what an average animal of that size and growth rate should have needed. Since the heritability for this trait is 40%, beef producers can make progress by selecting for feed efficiency using RFI. Just think: producers could select bulls that would sire calves which combine excellent growth potential with very favourable feed conversion! Another real benefit would be having a herd of cows that ate less feed than usual but which gave the same production. As we combine genetic marker DNA testing, EPD selection tools, and bull evaluation centers that test for RFI feed efficiency, we will be able to make progress at reducing the single biggest variable cost on the feef farm, feed (OB).

straw should cover their legs when lying down.

• Use calf coats for young calves in severe weather.

• Provide warm water (at least) after every milk feeding.

• Feed calves according to chart recommendations, to assure proper energy balance/immune function is maintained.

• Feed a quality calf starter as soon as possible.

FUTURES MARKET

PORK (US $ per cwt.)

December	$87.57
February	$90.27
April	$92.80

BEEF

December	$121.60
February	$123.60
April	$126.70

COLD WEATHER'S IMPACT ON CALVES

• Calves have limited capability to regulate their body temperature, due to: immature metabolism: Pre-ruminant stage- a lack of reuminal fermentation; a lack of appreciable fat stores; a need to consume sufficient calories to generate enough body heat.

• Calves experience cold stress at moderate temperatures.

• Lower critical temperature decreases with age, along with greater energy intake and ruminal development.

• Environment also influences a calf's ability to cope with cold-related stess. Wind chill can alter temperature to be outside of the TN zone. Wet or mud-caked hair provides poor insulation. Daytime vs. night time temperatures can be very different based on solar energy, and add to the potential impact of cold stress.